



# MCCC NEWS

Mid-Cities Commodore Club, Inc.

February 1987

Issue 2

## ISDN and You

Reprinted from the Telephone Times

Courtesy of Earl Drake

You wake up. Yawn and stretch. Stroll over to the computer video terminal. On the screen flashes a message. "SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1995... DON'T FORGET YOUR ANNIVERSARY." It's too late. You've already forgotten it.

"Yikes!" you think. Instantly, you key up florists on the directory. The monitor hums and prints "ACE FLOWERS... WE DELIVER."

You dial up ACE. While you're on-line ordering a dozen roses, a message light flashes. The monitor reads: BROTHER RON CALLING... SAYS DON'T FORGET TODAY'S YOUR ANNIVERSARY."

"I could have used that warning yesterday," you think. You tell him so on the keyboard, since you're still talking to the ACE man in the voice mode.

We're out of roses, the florist tells you. Will orchids be OK? On your other video screen, the slow-scan one, the ACE man holds up the orchids. The jerky movement on the screen reminds you of that old MAX HEADROOM stuff from back in the eighties. You would think those bright engineers at ol' Ma Bell would be able to get a picture almost as good as the 300 channel, 100" flat screen digital stereo T.V. on the wall.

You can't remember whether lavender makes your wife angry or amorous. You settle on chrysanthemums.

The preceding scene is an example of ISDN in action. ISDN, or Integrated Services Digital Network, is the future of telephone service in Southwestern Bell. S.W.B.T. is now building in the capability to eventually offer it to customers.

"When you get to the heart of it, ISDN is not a service at all, but an evolution of the digital network to serve the needs of customers from residential all the way through Fortune 500 businesses," said Wayne Drews, district staff manager-network planning.

The single-pair telephone line can do far more than transmit one conversation.

ISDN combined with digital sets, a color video monitor, and a computer terminal, coupled with an interface would provide the capability to transmit

and receive multiple messages. "My wife could be talking to a friend on the phone while I was receiving stock quotes. Then I might have an incoming message saying my boss wants to speak to me. All over one phone line."

"The signaling channel doesn't make a sound when it rings with ISDN, (unless you want it to) so it's not necessary to let the person you're talking to know you're being interrupted. A red light might flash on the set and display the number of the incoming call. By hitting a few buttons, you could send a message back to the second caller without interrupting the first call."

Since ISDN is truly a digital network, data could be transmitted from one terminal to another without modems. Baud rates up to 6400 would be standard.

ISDN will save the telephone company money on one hand and cost it and its customer's on another. Since it can connect digital terminal equipment (handsets, monitors or computers) at either end, it would be unnecessary to translate from analog to digital and back to analog. The digital transmission would mean no back-ground noise (no glitches!): boosting the signal would be unnecessary, too.

The costs will come from the new digital switches and equipment needed to make this network operate. Also the telephones in use today will be obsolete and will have to be replaced.

The vast uses of ISDN offer business customers much more than the residence users at first. Their use of high-speed, low cost communications and computers already in place, make them the obvious first customers of ISDN. Hobby computer users will also be obvious first users. The availability of interfaces and digital handsets seem to be the main stumbling blocks.

At a recent international ISDN conference, the consensus was that by 1992, there will be significant islands of ISDN, with some trial equipment in place. By 1995, 50 percent of metro areas will have ISDN capability. In the year 2000, it's expected to be the standard.

This sound far-fetched? Just six

years after the introduction of TOUCH-TONE, it was available to 90 percent of ALL Bell System customers. Eighty percent of Bell customers could dial DDD just 4 years after the first customer dialed long distance call was made.

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## Explore Startext

Excerpt by Gerry Barker

Our new one-week subscription, "7 Days of STARTEXT", is now available off the shelf in most parts of Tarrant County. These packages sell for \$4.95 and contain a special code word which activates a one-week STARTEXT account. These subscriptions -- unlike the free trial passwords -- include full use of STARMAIL.

We hope to have the 7-day package available in a number of Dallas locations within the next several weeks. One problem we've encountered is with stores which operate out of state, like Federated, Babbages and CompuShop. Unfortunately, they won't carry any item which cannot be sold throughout the chain.

At any rate, you can also order "7 Days" by mail from us. If you have a friend you would like to introduce STARTEXT to, they make great gifts. By the way, we are offering a special bulk rate discount to user groups who order 10 or more. Write me for details!

## Input Routines

by Tom Lynch

SFVCUG



The problem expressed in a plaintive letter I received from John Kincaid of Apple Valley CA is a classic in all software - Provide a "BULLET PROOF" entry routine to trap all input errors. The INPUT statement supplied by COMMODORE is vulnerable to all manner of incorrect keyboard responses. The only thing they have fixed since the PET days has been the response to null entries (the PET responded to these by dropping out of BASIC and saying "READY").

Many routines have been written to solve these problems since the early PET days. One solution is to use a GET loop instead of the INPUT statement. The GET loop can be programmed to respond exactly like an INPUT statement as well as parsing out incorrect keyboard entries. The general form of this technique is:

```
100 GOSUB 1000      :REPLACES INPUT
110 PRINT ZZ$       :THE REPLY
```

.....

```
1000 REM SUBROUTINE FOR INPUT
1010 ZZ$=""          :INITIALIZE
1020 GET Z$
1030 IF ZZ$="" AND Z$=CHR$(13)
      THEN 1020      :REJECT NULL
1035 REM CURSOR UP
1040 IF Z$=CHR$(145) THEN 1020
1045 REM CURSOR DOWN
1050 IF Z$=CHR$(17)  THEN 1020
1060 REM REJECT OTHER CHARACTERS
1100 IF Z$=CHR$(13) THEN RETURN
      :EXIT
1110 ZZ$=ZZ$+Z$      :FORM STRING
1120 PRINT ZZ$[CURSOR UP]
1130 GOTO 1020       :LOOP AGAIN
```

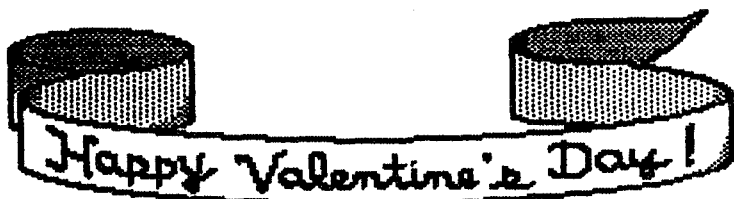
Here we use the real time clock to count out intervals to flash a pseudo cursor. TI is the jiffy clock that counts every sixtieth of a second. The key to the flashing is a flipping routine formed with:

```
Z=-1*(Z$!1)
```

If you start Z with a seed value of 1, then repeated execution of this equation will give an alternating 1-0-1-0 sequence. Try it! Using this calculated value for Z we can form a character which alternates between any set of two. For example:

```
ZC$=CHR$(32+Z*134)
```

alternates a space and a cross@hatched square. Pick whatever characters suit you from the table of graphics characters in the appendix of the PROGRAMMERS REFERENCE GUIDE.



Now that you have the essential techniques you can add more features if you desire. For example, you can allow the 'DEL' key to delete the last typed character or perhaps delete an entire entry by pressing 'CLR'.

```
1000 REM SUBROUTINE INPUT
1010 ZZ$="":ZT=TI:Z=1
1020 GET Z$
1030 IF TI>ZT+15 THEN Z=-1*(Z<>1)
      ZC$=CHR$(32+Z*134):ZT=TI
      .....rest of the loop.....

1110 PRINT ZZ$ZC$[CUR UP]
1120 GOTO 1020
```

The above routine gets characters from the keyboard, adds them to the reply string and exits the routine if there is at least one character. This simple fix has many shortcomings, the greatest of which is the lack of a cursor to focus our eyes on the point where the action is. Let's see how to make one appear. Here is the general idea:

## C-128 Tip

by Ed Stratton

Albany Corvallis CUG



If you use the keyboard buffer in any of your 64 programs to give operational commands such as "run" and a carriage return, and would like to convert that portion to fit your 128, then substitute the following pokes.

|             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| poke 631,82 | poke 842,82 |
| poke 632,85 | poke 843,85 |
| poke 633,78 | poke 844,78 |
| poke 634,13 | poke 845,13 |
| poke 198,4  | poke 208,4  |

## Amiga Awards



Deluxe Paint and One-on-One, two Amiga titles by Electronic Arts received rewards for excellence by the Software Publishers Association. The Software publishers Association is a software developers trade association based in the United States.

Deluxe Paint was acclaimed the Best Graphic program for 1986 and One-on-One received its reward in the Best Adaptation to a New Computer Format category (say that fast three times!).

## Beginner's Column

by Richard Carter

CHUG, Houston

This is the first in a series of articles aimed at aiding new computer users. A number of topics will be covered, including terminology, installation, and general precautions. Subsequent articles will focus on individual topics. As the C-64 is the basis for the system used by most of us, this article will begin by examining the C-64.

**FORMATTING:** Preparing a floppy disk for use. A disk needs to be formatted before starting a program. To format a disk, type:

```
OPEN 15,8,15, "n0:disk name, id".
```

(A disk name can be up to sixteen characters long, and id is any two characters or numbers.) After the red light on the drive goes out, enter CLOSE 15. (When entering instructions on the keyboard, always end the command with "return".) It is impossible to damage any of hardware by entering a wrong command.

**HARDWARE:** The physical components of a computer system: the computer, disk drives, monitor, etc.

**PERIPHERALS:** Accessories useful to a computer system. All peripherals are hardware items: joysticks, modems, etc.

**INTERFACES, PORTS, and CONNECTORS:** Where you plug in peripherals. Just as your table lamp is a peripheral, interfacing with the electricity through a "plug," your printer is a hardware peripheral, interfacing with your computer through a cable, etc.

### INSTALLATION

Around the outside of the C-64 you will see a variety of ports, connectors, interfaces (plugs), and an on/off switch. The ports connect the computer to the disk drive, printer, and screen, called peripherals. Two joystick ports are on the right side of the case, in front of the on/off switch and the power supply connection. The power supply converts your household electricity to meet the needs of the computer. In the conversion process, a fair amount of heat is generated, which is why the power is not built into the C-64 case.

Looking at the back of the C-64, on the far left is the cartridge slot, which is where you'll insert any cartridges you might use such as games and fast-loaders. The channel selector is next; it allows you to choose between channels three and four if you are using a TV set. The connection for the TV is

located to the right of the channel selector; the necessary cable is normally supplied with the C-64. Farther to the right, the next port is the audio-video connector. If you are using a monitor instead of a TV set, this is where the monitor cable is plugged in. The other end of the audio-video cable has two sets of color-coded connectors, one set for audio, the other for video. The video portion can connect to the monitor (or a VCR), while the audio can be connected to a stereo system. The last round port is the serial port which can connect up to four disk drives and a printer to the C-64. The shorter of the two remaining connectors is for the cassette recorder, which can be used with or instead of a disk drive. Another use for the cassette port is to supply power to printer interfaces (the subject of another article). Finally, the last connector is the user port, which allows the use of a variety of peripherals, including modems.

Each piece of hardware you use is connected with a specific cable having a unique appearance. Each can only be plugged into a specific configuration. The fact that each cable and port is unique makes it almost impossible to hook-up your system incorrectly. For example, the power supply cord cannot be connected to the serial port, etc.

#### PRECAUTIONS

The C-64 power supply has a high failure rate, and a faulty one can damage the computer. Place your power supply where air can move around it. A natural spot for the power supply is on the floor, but avoid putting it on carpet, as the air flow is reduced. Also, keep the case clean and free of dust. Some users place a fan to blow air across the power supply whenever the computer is on.

The 1541 disk drive is the most troublesome and the most important peripheral in the 64 system. The problem comes from the mechanical assemblies in the drive shifting in relation to one another. This condition is known as "misaligned drive", and occurs when loading certain copy-protected software or when formatting a new disk while the drive is hot. A machine-gun like sound can be heard when formatting, and is unavoidable. The action inside the drive, which you hear as "head-knocking", is what causes the drive to start losing alignment.

The end result is that if you format a disk or load copy protected software that causes "head-banging" while the drive is hot, you will begin a never-ending battle to keep your drive in good condition. Most of us have no alternative but to load the software even though it could damage the drive. The best that can be done is to keep the drive cool while in use, and make formatting disks the first job done, before the drive has time to warm up.

The power supply for the 1541 is built into the case, and is the main cause of alignment problems. As with the C-64's power supply, air flow is important, and anything that improves circulation benefits the drive, and anything restricting air flow harms it. Never place books, papers or disks on the drive, as they act as insulators, restricting air flow, and building up heat in the drive. Similarly, air flow can be improved by several means. Fans can be placed over the grill, and are a great benefit, cooling the drive. Elevating the drive has also been proven helpful by increasing circulation. One popular method of elevating the drive is to place two rubber erasers under the feet at the rear of the drive.

Nobody Beats

# Babbage's

SOFTWARE FOR THE HOME

## The largest selection of home computer software !

### Amiga Enhancer

by Peter Baczor

### Commodore Business Machines



Commodore is releasing the Amiga Enhancer a software package that further enhances the capabilities of the Amiga computer. This \$14.95 three disk package includes Version 1.2 of the Amiga operating system. Some of the features and benefits of this package are as follows:

- Better memory management
- Quicker DOS functions
- Improved error handling
- Auto-configuration support (enables RAM expansions and hard disk drives to operate more efficiently)
- Supports the A1020, 5 1/4" disk drive, in the Amiga mode
- Enhanced full-featured Notepad
- Added printer support including:
- Apple Imagewriter
- Okidata 92
- Okidata 192
- Okidata 193
- Revised BASIC

# Genlock

by Peter Baczor

## Commodore Business Machines



The Amiga Genlock has been approved by the F.C.C. and is currently in production. The first shipments should be made by mid-December (1986). Suggested retail price is \$295.95 in the United States and will be available through the standard Amiga channels. Below is a description and specification of Genlock.

### AMIGA 1300 GENLOCK

The Amiga 1300 Genlock was designed to permit the outstanding graphics and audio created on an Amiga computer system to be overlaid on such video sources as laser disks, video tape or other computers. And what's more, you can add these special effects to your video products in either composite or RGB format.

A home movie, training tape or video business presentation, could be made more appealing by overlaying titles, captions and audio. Link together a video camera with Amiga animations and descriptive text to produce an entertaining video. Simply combine your VCR camera with an Amiga computer and 1300 Genlock and record everything on your VCR. In addition, the 1300 Genlock gives you the ability to mix stereo sources for further unique results. Now you can produce your own music video!

If your video productions are your hobby, you'll find the Amiga 1300 Genlock to be an affordable and integral part of your Amiga computer system.

### SPECIFICATIONS

#### INPUTS

- Composite video, RS-170
- Stereo audio, line level
- Stereo Amiga computer audio
- Amiga computer RGB video

#### OUTPUTS

- Composite video
- Stereo audio, line level, 600 ohm load
- RGB video, 1 volt into 75 ohm load (same pinouts as the monitor connector)

#### CONTROLS

- Hue for color correction of source video
- Horizontal Phase to position source video under Amiga computer graphics
- Audio Mix to adjust balance of Amiga computer audio to source
- Software control to turn off source audio
- Pixel switch

#### POWER REQUIREMENTS

- Power supplied by Amiga computer system

#### WEIGHT

- 2 lb. 5 oz.

#### DIMENSIONS

- 1.25"x10"x6.5" (HxWxD)

#### COLOR

- Standard Amiga light beige  
These specifications are subject to change without notice.

subject to



## The Guru Speaks

by Rick Schulz

A cloud of incense lazily curls up toward the ceiling; in the distance a gong sounds and silence falls over all as...

### The Guru Speaks

Guru, I foolishly removed my disk to place another into the drive when the machine prompted me, and the red disk drive light was still on. What should I do?

The Guru answers: Oh, impatient one! Learn, and do as the Guru: when asked for another disk, close your eyes, meditate and chant a mantra (OOOOOHHHHHHMMMMMIIIIIGGGGGAAAAA!!!). Sometimes the machine gets ahead of itself and asks for a disk before it is finished with the one it is currently reading. This happens most often with those lacking a second disk drive. There are several programs in the club library to repair the damage done to the disk if you are so unfortunate as to have this happen to you.

Also, the Guru advises that you upgrade to Workbench 1.2, for two reasons. First, the problem of asking for a disk before the machine is finished with the one in the drive has been largely eliminated. Secondly, version 1.2 has a command DISKDOCTOR which will restore any undamaged file on the disk.

Guru, when I double click on an icon and a window appears, sometimes the window is too small to display all the icons. How can I change the size of the window?

The Guru answers: A student of symmetrical interior design, I see! To do what you mask, first single click on the sizing gadget (lower right hand corner of the window) and adjust the window to the desired size. Then single click on the original icon. Finally, select from the workbench menu the snapshot function, found under the "special" sub-menu. This will cause the Amiga to save the new window dimensions to disk.

#### Ed.Note:

Find out the true story of "How We Created the Amiga Computer" from one of the head GURUs, R.J. Mical, author of the Amiga Intuition, in the JAN/FEB issue of INFO magazine. Must reading for all Amiga owners and informative for others!

# C-128 ML Q and A 128

by Michael LaPaglia

Question: What are the CLRCH, CHKIN, CKOUT routines and how can I use them in the C-128.

Answer: These are Kernal routines in the C-128. Their main purpose is Input/Output (I/O) to the screen, serial bus, and the user-port.

CHKIN \$FFC6 is used to set the serial bus to receive data from a device. CKOUT \$FFC6 sets the serial bus to send data to the device (printer, modem, drive, etc). CLRCH \$FFCC simply restores the I/O to its default settings.

For example, if you wanted to send data to the modem, you would first open the channel to the modem using SETNAM, SETLFS, SETBNK, & OPEN. Then you would JSR CKOUT, to set the modem port to accept output. Using \$FFD2 you could send data to the modem. The same is true to receive data from the modem, but you would use CHKIN, to set the channel to receive input. Use \$FFE4 to get the data one byte at a time. To toggle between IN and OUT, call CLRCH before you change from IN to OUT.

Some warnings. CHKIN, CKOUT, CLRCH all use the A,X,Y registers, so you would have to save any contents before you called these routines. As an example, let's say you wanted to send a file from a disk to the printer. To simplify things, we will do the OPENS in BASIC (while the OPENS are done here in BASIC, don't be afraid to try it in ML).

```
10 open8,8,8,"file,s,r":open4,4,7
20 sys (routine)
```

Routine:

```
LDX #$08      ; drive channel #
JSR CHKIN     ; set to get from drive
JSR $FFE4     ; get a char
PHA          ; temp store on stack
LDA $90       ; status reg
BNE OUT       ; if error or EOF end
JSR CLRCH     ; clear channel
LDX #$04      ; printer channel #
JSR CKOUT     ; set for out to printer
PLA           ; restore the byte from
              ; the drive
JSR $FFD2     ; send to printer
JSR CLRCH     ; clear channel
JMP ROUTINE   ; go back for more
OUT JSR CLRCH ; clear channel to exit
RTS           ; home james
```

The one minor problem with the above routine is that the last character from the disk is not printed, so the OUT# routine should first print the character and then CLRCH and RTS. I found this out the hard way after hours of wondering where the last letter was going. Also some of you might want to use a 'TEMP' location for storing the Accum instead of the stack just in case of an error. Those of you that are

strong of heart are more than welcome to use the stack. It's faster and shorter.

If you want to enter this using the ML monitor in the 128, remember that it is a simple monitor and will not accept labels. You must type the address for CLRCH, CHKIN, CKOUT where the listing shows the names. Try \$1300 as a safe location to assemble this program. An interesting side effect of the routines is that if you do not open a channel to the printer, the data is displayed on the screen instead. The reason for this is the subject for another column. For you programming maniacs try writing a program incorporating the info from this article and the one on INDFET/INDSTA, located elsewhere in this newsletter, into a print buffer in bank one. It can be done! [Ed. Note: I don't have another article. Look next month!]

The above info regarding CLRCH, CHKIN, CKOUT will also apply to the C-64.

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## Spring Classes Forming by Mary Louise Hagemeyer

It is again time to plan classes and educational activities for Spring. The following topics have been offered as suggestions for topics.

Introduction to Computers  
Beginning BASIC  
Assembly Language  
Introduction to Spreadsheets  
Introduction to Data Bases

If any of these subjects interest you, or, if you have other suggestions, please call me at 732-0982 or leave E-mail on the MCCC BBS (#25). There will be a nominal charge to cover the cost of room rentals and materials.

## H. E. B. Chapter

The MCCC quarterly meeting is in lieu of a HEB chapter meeting in January. At the MCCC meeting the program included 2 demonstrations. The Spartan System which makes it possible to use Apple software with a C64 was demonstrated by Roy King. Jack Smith demonstrated Digi-View for the Amiga.

Next month's meeting of HEB chapter will include a presentation by Okley Moss using Swifttax for preparation of 1986 tax returns.

Hope to see you there.-Rebecca Atwell

## Amiga Chapter

Our December meeting featured a display of entertainment software, and the chapter officers wish to thank all those who helped, especially Gary and Kennen McDonnell and John Tweedell for bringing their Amigas to the meeting. Workbench 1.2 was on display at the December meeting, laying to rest rumors this would be yet another piece of vaporware (software which, though advertised as "available soon", never appears). Contact your local retailer for your copy (at \$14.95); it does not appear that Commodore will give this to even new Amiga owners.

Many of us were pleased to see a new face at our December meeting, Anne Bartholomew of PC Expansion, and we hope she will be at more of our meetings in the future. There were representatives from three of the five area vendors of Amiga software present, affording our members a unique opportunity to talk with three representatives at one meeting.

At the January meeting there was a presentation of Page Setter, a desk-top publishing software package. The speaker was Anne Bartholomew of PC Expansion, and the chapter officers wish to extend their gratitude to her and PC Expansion for their time and energy.

Jack Detore, chapter vice-president, has worked very long and hard to produce an hour and a half tape highlighting the best of each meeting during the past year, in VHS and Beta, as well as 8 mm. format. He has also created a disk of pictures from these tapes, as well as a catalogue of the tapes of the meetings. These disks will be made available to our members in the very near future. Contact Jack Detore for your copies and further details.

Dave Campbell will give a class on "C" in February. The class will consist of 4 sessions, covering the fundamentals of the "C" language. Please note that this is not an introductory course in programming; the material presented requires a basic understanding of programming concepts and techniques, and will teach the student how these

techniques are applied in "C". David will teach from the Amiga version of Lattice "C"; if you have another version of "C", or have Lattice "C" for another machine, you are still welcome to attend the class. However, we do not guarantee that all the material can be ported to your version or machine. If you are interested in attending the class and did not sign up at the January meeting, please contact David.

The current plans for our February meeting call for a demonstration of the long awaited SideCar, if available. As many of you know, Peter Raffener brought the European SideCar to our December meeting, but encountered some hardware problems which prevented the demonstration from being as effective as it might have been.

If all goes as planned, there will be demonstration of printers at our meeting March. Don't miss the meetings!

## Reading the Keyboard

by R. Eric Lee

Most programmers use INPUT or GET to receive input from the user. The INPUT command is quick and dirty, GET offers more control, but there are times when neither GET nor INPUT will work. Let's say you wanted the user to "Press Control and P to print". How would you know that the user is pressing the CTRL and P keys? The solution is to PEEK addresses 203 and 653. If you PEEK(653) you will get a number between 0 and 7. The numbers 0-7 tell you if and/or in what combination the SHIFT, CTRL, or Commodore keys are being pressed.

|                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 0 = none       | 4 = CTRL              |
| 1 = SHIFT      | 5 = SHIFT + CTRL      |
| 2 = C=         | 6 = CTRL + C=         |
| 3 = SHIFT + C= | 7 = SHIFT + CTRL + C= |

If you PEEK(203) you will get a number between 0 and 64. The number you get will tell you which key (as distinct from character) is being pressed. The following table gives the number associated with each key. [See chart below.]

By PEEKing address 653 and 203, nearly 500 different key-press patterns can be detected. Since address 653 can have 8 different values, you could, for example, define 32 different function keys (i.e. F1, SHIFT+F1, C+=F1, SHIFT+CTRL+F1....). And you thought there were only 8!

Let's say you wanted to allow the user to do a screen dump at any time by pressing CTRL P. The following line would do it:

```
100 IF PEEK(653)=4 AND PEEK(203)=41
THEN GOSUB 60000:REM SCREEN DUMP
Notice that 63 equals the STOP key.
Disable and the STOP key
(POKE788,52:POKE808,239) and put it to
some good use ("Press STOP key to stop
printing").
```

# Scribble!

Review by John Engel  
CHUG, Houston



PaperClip users, close your eyes and dream of using your great word processor and all of it's powerful commands with a real 80 column screen. You can send a command for double strike, and the character on the screen is bold-faced. It's here for the Amiga. SCRIBBLE! by Micro-Systems software is a true WYSIWYG word processor. That means that What You See Is What You Get.

With SCRIBBLE! you can set the margins (top, bottom, left, and right), default colors, text width, and tabs. This is then saved to a disk as a format file. You are able to recall and use it whenever you need it. I have files for labels, letters, and other text.

The text area is 16,380 bytes large, but you can expand it. I have set aside as much as 100K on a 512K machine and still had free memory. After entering your text, you are able to edit it with the mouse. Just use the mouse to cursor down and go to work. You are able to use the mouse to boldface, underline, and italicize by selecting that option from the pull down menu and then running the cursor over the text you wish to change. Other pull down menus allow you to select documents form files, print your text, cut and paste, search, and spell check.

Spell checking is another "fun" part of this program. When you select this option, you may check a document, window (only what is on screen), or just one word. The disk contains over 40,000 words and an option to add your own. While spell checking, the program will search for each word and highlight a word it has not found. You then are given a menu that will allow you to skip, ignore (through the entire document), learn guess, or correct a word. Guess is my favorite. When you select this, the program will give you a bunch of words with like spelling. You may select a word to replace the one in your document.

Another feature of this program is multi-tasking. You are able to have FOUR open windows at a time. This will allow you to work on four documents at once and transfer text between them.

I bought an early version of this program, and the manufacturer sent me an update within a month with text files on the disk explaining the changes. The spell checker was added to the update along with mail merge.

Overall, this program combines the powerful commands of PaperClip with the ease of operation of the Amiga.

Other programs offered for the Amiga have had poor reviews. I feel that SCRIBBLE! will emerge as the definitive program for the Amiga. The suggested retail price is \$99.00, but I have seen it discounted. It requires 256K, but a

512K machine will allow more text area. This is one program that is well worth the money.



## New BBS Downloads

Here is a list of files currently available for downloading on the second MCCC BBS (640-7377). The list was compiled on Jan. 18th so you may want to check it again for even more additions. All club members are welcome to log on to the board and download any programs you wish. The board supports all personal computers but, remember, you must be a current member of the MCCC. To log on, simply type in your First and Last name at the prompt.

All programs in the file transfer section are public domain files. Do not attempt to send a copyrighted program or article as it may endanger your club membership. The file transfer section is listed in the "U" section of the main menu.

|                 |                                            |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------|
| BIORHYTHMN CHAR | 40-column screen chart                     |
| 2-1571 BURSTCOP | Quick copy program for two 1571 drives     |
| BOING.C64       | Bouncing ball similar to Amiga demo        |
| ROBBERS         | Game                                       |
| LACE.ARC        | Dpaint pic. disc #11                       |
| OTHELLO.ARC     | Basic 3-D game. #11                        |
| SOLAR           | Info about sizes & distances of planets    |
| KINGTUT.64      | DPaint of kingtut use Joystick Port #2     |
| SOLAR80         | sizes & distances of planets 80 char.      |
| DUIII.ARC       | AMIGA DIR UTILITY + A MUST: NEW VERSION!!  |
| STARTERM.ARC    | B AMIGA STARTERM V-3                       |
| PSOUND.ARC      | PD COMMUNICATION PROG                      |
| DIGI2.ARC       | AMIGA PERFECT SOUND DIGITAL PLAYER!!!      |
| 128 LIBRARY     | AMIGA SAMPLE SOUNDS FOR PERFECT SOUND..    |
| COMM TERM 3+    | Library program to crunch/decrunch         |
| ML.VER3+        | Supports x-modem/punter & 300/1200 baud    |
| COMM TERM.DOC   | Needed to use COMM TERM                    |
| LIBRARY 5.2     | Full instructions for this freeware        |
| LIB5.2.DOCS     | Combines or uncombines C=64 files          |
| BBS.DOCS        | Docs for library 5.2                       |
| COSMO2.ARC      | Docs on this system                        |
| PEACHERINE      | AMIGA-ASTEROIDS TYPE GAME FOR AMIGOIDS!!   |
| LIBRARY V9.0    | Scott Joplin Ragtime song for Deluxe Music |
| MULTITERM128    | Library pgm for 64                         |
| MULTI128 3.6    | Term for 128,40 or 80 col,punt,xmod        |
|                 | ML file for multiterm128 v3.6              |



# PaperClip II

Review by Mark Ord

Catalina C.C.C., Tucson, AZ

I am going to list some of the things you can do with Paperclip II (PC-II). I hope this list will help you decide if it is worth upgrading from Paperclip (PC) to PC-II or buying PC-II as your first word processor.

1. PC-II uses four pull-down menus (accessed by function keys) for screen colors, disk and printer setup and two menus for modem functions. They are easy to use and cover many of the setup functions.

2. PC-II has many ways to move the cursor around in the text. F1 will move the cursor one screen down the text (22 lines) and F3 will move it up one screen. CLR/HOME moves cursor to the top left of screen, press it again and the cursor will go to the start of the text. Shift and RUN/STOP together will move the cursor to the end of the text. All of the direction arrows will move the cursor and CONTROL then arrow will move cursor rapidly in the direction of the arrow. PC-II has two TABS, a regular TAB like a typewriter and one for numeric. Both TABS can be used in the same column.

3. Text can be moved or repeated by line, phrases or columns. I recommend you save your text before trying the move functions, for it is very easy to lose text in the move until you get the hang of it. If you use a phrase several times in your text, PC-II is capable of setting up 52 instant phrases.

4. Columns can be moved, shifted, repeated, sorted and erased. You can also do addition and subtraction within a column. Remember to save text before trying any of these moves.

5. PC-II can scan text for specific groups of words. You can use this to replace a phrase with a new phrase or to find a phrase in a large text.

6. PC-II can underline, boldface, print in italics and sub/superscript. You can also tell PC-II where a long word could be hyphenated. This may need to be done when the word is at the end of a line.

7. You can tell PC-II what to use for left and right margin, page length, headers and footers, paging, spacing, pitching, left and right justification, auto centering and forced paging.

8. Unfortunately, the maximum text size is 499 lines (999 with 40 column screen). If you have a text longer than 499 lines, you must use global file links. However, linking is very easy to do with PC-II. It is also possible to move (append) or repeat text from one file to another file. This is helpful in setting up global files when your text gets too large.

9. Text can be saved as a program file (a block with all information included)

or as a sequential file (a data file containing only text and no format instructions).

10. Direct disk commands include erasing a disk file, formatting a disk, validate a disk, reading error messages, setting the disk device number and setting the dictionary device number.

11. PC-II has a table of contents file and a form letter file. They can be modified to be used in your text.

12. Telecommunications is accessed using NO SCROLL.

Pushing F1 will give you a menu for Baud Rate (50-9600), Parity (none, odd, even, mark, space), Word Length (7 or 8), Duplexing (half or full), Text Buffer (send or capture), Handshaking (xon or xoff), Protocol (xmodem crc, xmodem, punter cl), Modem Type (1600, 1650, 1660, mighty mo, hesmodem II, 1670, hayes, rs232 interface), Communication Type (ASCII or Commodore), Auto-Line Feed (on or off), Line Feed Generation (on or off), Backspace Code (8, 20, 127), Form Feed Response (ignore, line feed, clear screen), Bell Response (beep, ignore), Reverse-Field Printing (enabled, disabled), Control Characters (visible, visible-nc, ignore), Clock Display (#1-24 hour or #2-connect time) and Set Clock.

Pushing F3 will give you a menu for Dial Number (for direct dial), Dial Tagged List (dial different numbers until a connection is made), Hang Up, Answer Phone, Dialing Type (tone or pulse), Number Of Dial Attempts (1-continuous), Rings Before Answering (0-7), Phone #1-#10 (ten numbers can be held by PC-II for automatic dialing), Save Current Configuration to Disk and Load New configuration From Disk.

Downloading is done by pushing C= and R and uploading is done by pushing C= and T. A nice thing about downloading is that the screen does not change, so you don't have to remember the name of the file you are downloading. When PC-II asks for the file name, it is still on the screen. A report of the progress of the download is sent to the screen (Block xx; Attempt yy). If 10 attempts (80 sec.) go by without success, the message "Transfer aborted" is sent to the screen.

You can go back and forth from text to modem at almost anytime. Therefore, all direct disk commands can be used while on-line.

13. PC-II has a Unformatting Text function. This will remove return markers from text that was downloaded with return markers at the end of each line instead of at the end of each paragraph. This make editing text easier. [Ed. Note: This sounds like the answer to a prayer to me!]

14. On the back of PC-II disk are a spell checker and 33 printer files (130 printer files total on both sides of the disk). Spellpack comes with 38,000 entries and if the printer files are removed on your working copy, there is room for about 100,000 entries (1571

disk drive). The spellpack is easy to use and is much faster than PC spellpack.

15. Screen display can be either 40 or 80 column. PC-II came with a cable to get a monochrome display on a 1702 monitor. The 80 column screen is easy to read using a gray or black background. The F2 menu is used to set the screen colors. The 40/80 DISPLAY is used to switch back and forth. The screen will not switch from 40 to 80 column if the text on the screen was done in 40 column mode. Try this: save the text on the screen to file, load a text that was done in 80 column mode to screen, now change to 80 column using the 40/80 DISPLAY, reload your first text to screen when you are done with your text save in 80 column mode, and it will be able to switch next time.

16. PC-II has several utility programs. DISKCOPY (this utility was not ready for this release) will copy a disk in 128 mode. BACKUP 64 will copy a disk in 64 mode. CREATEBOOT will make your program automatically load and run when the C128 is turned on or reset using the boot sector. PRINTER TEST will test your printer. There are also several sample text files on PC-II that can be used for practice.

17. A welcome change from PC is that when you push return in the middle of a line PC-II moves everything to the right of the cursor to the next line instead of removing it from text.

18. F7 is used to enable or disable word wrap.

19. F8 is used to change the video output column size. Pushing CONTROL and "v" will give you a video output in the same format as a printed output. In 40 column display mode, you can view your text in 40, 80 or 160 column format. In 80 column display mode you can view your text in 80, 160 or 320 column format. The 160/320 format will only show you how the text will look; the text is not readable.

20. PC-II will hold the name of the last file loaded. When you want to save it to disk the file name will automatically appear at the top of the screen.

21. PC-II includes a manual, a tutorial, a key (dongle) and a monochrome monitor cable. The manual and tutorial are easy to use, and the manual contains a command summary which is very helpful.

## Dynamic Keyboard

by Jeff Risinger

CHUG, Clear Lake, Houston



Programs you have which load other programs use this process, but use the same text color as background, so you can't watch, allowing a cleaner looking screen. This file is for the C-64.

Input the command to be used with PRINT" (shift/crlr) COMMAND (home no shift.)" The screen is cleared, the command to be used is entered (RUN and LIST are some of the possibilities), then the cursor is removed by pressing (crlr/home). Clear byte 198 with POKE198,0. This clears the keyboard buffer of any keystrokes, which can sometimes stay in the buffer for a long time.

At this time I'll provide a simple explanation about this process and the PRINT keyword. Use of the PRINT statement will change the location of the start of a routine. Anyone trying to write a program using this routine without success should not give up experimenting. Study the next line as it is explained.

```
POKE 198,0: FOR L = 631 TO 640:
POKE L, 13: NEXT: END
```

Byte 198 contains the number of key presses that can be entered. The POKE to 198 allows 10 characters in the keyboard buffer. The location 631 to 640 hold the value of the keypress. By POKEing 13 to them they all become RETURNS. End is required to force the program to work. It tells the buffer to use its contents. In normal use of this feature on the C-64, you will not always need ten RETURN's and may have to adjust bytes "198" and "631-640" to meet your needs.

The program included here uses only three of the bytes in the buffer and uses cursor-down graphics to position them. The NEW takes the place of the POKE 198,0. Bytes 43 and 44 are the low and high bytes of the start of basic memory, and the values 1 and 8 point to 2049. This line is included in case an earlier program has changed their values. NOTE: The cursor-down graphic is listed as (number of cursor downs). Check where they and the end keywords are. Also note what is in quotes in line 30.

```
10 A$=REM PROGRAM NAME GOES HERE IN
QUOTES
20 B$=REM B$ CAN BE RUN OR FOR A
MACHINE LANGUAGE PROGRAM SYS
FOLLOWED BY A NUMBER. WHATEVER
IS USED MUST BE IN QUOTES
30 PRINT"(crlr/home two cursor downs)
POKE43,1:POKE44,8:NEW":PRINT"(two
cursor downs) LOAD"CHR$(34)
A$CHR$(34)",8,1"
40 PRINT"(four cursor downs)
"B$(crlr/home without shift)";
50 POKE 198,3:POKE631,13: POKE632,13:
POKE 633,13:END
```

I have to credit Run, Power Play, and Compute! magazines and books. I have studied them to learn this file. This is not a complete description of this process; It is covered in many books and magazines. If you want to use it you should study a lot more. This file is only intended as a starter.

# Superscript Notes

by Smiley Courtney

QCCCC



Concerning the dictionary: Superscript comes with a 70,000 word dictionary, which includes word variations (such as work, worked, works, working, etc.) and common first names. I like the ease of adding new words: one key stroke. You can add up to 16,000 MORE words, the maximum space on a disk. (The Apple version will hold only 7,000 more!) I use several dictionaries--one for computer oriented documents and one for work.

Superscript is autobooted by the 128. It then prompts for your work disk. Remember that data disks formatted in the 1571 double-sided mode, will load faster than if formatted as single-sided. What the program looks for on your work disk is a "defaults" file. This will establish your working environment and your printer codes. It is here that you can program the "ESC" key to any command sequence you like, using whichever other key you wish. For example, I use two drives, so an \$ESC + 9 will switch the default drive to device number nine. This is much quicker than \$F1 + D + U + U + 9, and easier to remember. You can also string commands together so that several are executed from the one keystroke. The title of this article can be centered, underlined, and printed in bold face just by pressing \$ESC + C !! -- or any other letter you wish. But it can do more than just store commands. Commonly used phrases or multi-line addresses can be loaded from a glossary, or you can load a pre-defined document layout (or the newsletter, perhaps?) at a touch!

Superscript is compatible with Superbase 128 -- in fact, they can be co-resident in memory. (This is called integrated software, like Lotus 1-2-3). Many QCCCC members use Easy Script, and Superscript was written as a greatly enhanced 128 upgrade for that program. This means you don't have to re-type all those 64 files. It also means you won't have to learn a completely new routine, just add to what you have.

It's also a full-function calculator. Superscript allows you to extend the editing line up to 240 columns for wide documents like financial statements. It offers decimal tabs (lines up the "." in \$ figures) and a complete set of calculator operations. And you can add rows and columns; combined with the command features I mentioned above for formulas, Superscript becomes a decent spreadsheet, but with easier screen editing.

EEEEEEK!!! If you like using a mouse, Superscript will support that too: good for scrolling, loading documents, selecting commands and defining blocks

of text.

If you have heard of the "Fog Index", and you tend to write a bit "high", you might like a listing of document statistics: number of paragraphs, sentences, words, and average word length, as well as a list of word frequency, in alphabetic, decreasing or increasing order. (The "Fog Index" for this article is 5.66).

One thing I do not like about Superscript -- there are several ways to view the directory without disturbing your work area, which is very good, but you can not load a disk directory as a document.

Unlike many C128 word processors, Superscript works in both 40 and 80 column modes. HOWEVER, if you are going to spend \$\$\$ for a computer as powerful as the 128, and a program as sophisticated as Superscript, spend a little more for an RGB monitor -- it's worth it!

## Collecting Disks Baton Rouge Area C.U.G.

One disk command that doesn't get as much attention as it should is the COLLECT command. BASIC 2.0 users will know this command as the disk verify or VALIDATE command.

COLLECT caused the disk to throw away the old BAM (Block Availability Map) and rebuild a new one. The process starts with the first directory entry. The disk picks up the track and sector coordinates of the first block of the file and begins tracing the block chain. During the trace, the disk re-allocates each block back into BAM. COLLECT is complete once all directory entries (PRG, SEQ, REL andUSR) have been examined.

Improperly closed files (splat) are thrown away by the COLLECT operation. An improperly closed file is indicated by an asterisk (\*) preceding the file type in a directory listing. This can occur in any number of ways: no DCLOSE or CLOSE command after recording a file, DISK FULL occurring before the file is CLOSED, hitting the STOP key while saving a program, or a power failure while storing data.

Regardless of how it happens, unCLOSED files should NOT be SCRATCHED! SCRATCH does not erase blocks; it merely de-allocates them from the BAM. This means that the old data is left behind (including track and sector pointers) but in blocks that are now available for re-use.

Consider this: You pull out a full diskette that has all files properly CLOSED. Now you want to SAVE a couple of programs on this diskette, but there is not enough room. You, therefore, SCRATCH 4 or 5 old files that are no longer needed. With more than enough space, you SAVE your first new program with no

problems. Now you go to SAVE the second program and for some reason the operation is aborted, leaving this file improperly CLOSED. Chances are that the last block to be written points at a block that was previously used by one of your old files. This block would contain old track and sector pointers which might point at other blocks which are now in use, possibly the program that you just SAVED successfully.

SCRATCHing this file would then de-allocate blocks that were just written plus blocks belonging to your other program. Another SAVE at this point could be hazardous. The disk might choose to re-use those free blocks that belong to the other, thus replacing parts of the first program with parts of the second.

A COLLECT or VALIDATE after the aborted SAVE would have avoided all problems. The unCLOSED PRG file would be discarded and the other file preserved.

COLLECT has only one drawback. Any blocks allocated by the block-allocate (B-A) command will be freed by a COLLECT as these will not belong to a chain as with other files.

Subsequent B-A and B-W commands use these blocks possibly overwriting valid data. However, with the advent of RELative files, direct access should be fading from use.

Otherwise, it's never too soon for a COLLECT or VALIDATE. If your block count doesn't add up or you suspect another undesirable condition, use COLLECT or VALIDATE to be safe.

## Geowrite Tips

By Dick Libby

Southern Maine Commodore Club

**Power GEOWrite:** When you are working on a long document, you can speed up your writing by having the right margin pulled in so that the screen won't flip. Now you can type right along with no delay. When you're done, go back and add font changes, boldfacing, etc. and then pull the margin out, set the tabs, and run a full page preview. Also, if you know where some page breaks will occur (the end of a section or chapter, etc.), put them in. This will help speed up paging when you're doing your printing. Eventually, Berkeley hopes to have a "text grabber", which will allow you to use your own word processor to write then change it to GEOWrite format for fonts, styling, etc.

**Printer Default:** Many people seem to have a problem getting their work to print correctly. The problem seems to be that when GEOS boots, it looks through the deskTop notepad and makes the first printer driver it finds the default. When you open your work disk, however, the program does not look for the driver you put on it. This means you must do a select printer from the deskTop to load yours. Here is a step-by-step solution which makes your printer driver the default.

1. Make a complete back-up copy (which you've already done before even using GEOS, right?!!)

2. Remove the write protect tab from your BOOT disk.

3. Boot GEOS (this will be one of the few times you should do anything to this file on the BOOT disk).

4. Find the default printer driver on the BOOT disk (usually on page 4 of the deskTop notepad). The first driver is the first one on the lowest numbered page with the order going from left to right with the top row preceding the bottom. Generalaly, you will find the Commodore 801 in this first position. If this is not your printer, do the following:

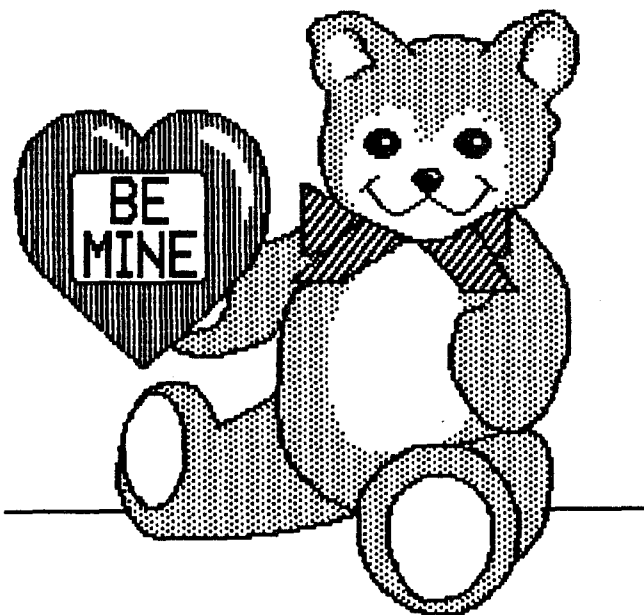
- a. Throw away the driver that is currently first on the disk.

- b. Look for the driver that corresponds to your printer. A few are on the back of the disk, so you may need to look there.

- c. Move it to the border and put it in the gray area.

- d. Now go back and place your driver in the same place you found the first one. (Note - a large driver, like the Okimate, may require you to throw out another driver to make room.) If you do need to get your driver from the back, remember to close the disk, flip it, open the disk to get your driver into the gray area, close the disk again, reflip it, and open it again.

5. Reboot GEOS. Your driver should now be the default drive and will set up automatically everytime you boot up. Make sure your driver is the only one you put on your work disks, just in case.



# Soft Disk Errors

by Tom Lynch

SFVCUG

While this article is intended for dual drive copiers, the same problem can occur in a single drive backup. The problem is drive errors that appear in different sectors each time a backup is attempted. My SD-2 and 4040 disk drive have unforgiving micro-coded routines within the drives that stop when a disk error is detected. After several attempts, getting errors such as 23, a checksum on different sectors each time, I sensed that a deeper problem existed.

I have found this problem to be rare. It is obviously tied to specific disk drives since recently I found four disks from a 1541 owner all with the same problem. I have several theories; take your pick!

1) Weak magnetic recording causes poor read, giving errors in an erratic manner.

2) Slight misalignment causing a variation of read signal depending on disk position and other environmental factors.

3) Poor diskettes having a variation of permeability across the diskette surface causing variation of read signal.

There are a few ways to copy such a disk. I chose doing a direct disk to disk, sector by sector copy. The difference is letting the program redirect the sector copy again if an error crops up. While this won't cure a hard error, it works wonders on a soft error diskette. The program involves lower level disk commands. Look at your drive manual for details.

```
10 OPEN1,8,15 (OPEN COMMAND CHANNEL)
20 OPEN2,8,2,"#" (ALLOCATE BUFFER)
30 R=20 (SECTORS)
40 FOR T=1 TO 35
42 IF T=18 THEN RANGE=18
44 IF T=25 THEN RANGE=17
46 IF T=31 THEN RANGE=16
50 FOR S=0 TO RANGE
60 PRINT#1,"U1:"2;0;(T);(S)
      X-DRIVE 0
70 GOSUB 500 (LOOK FOR ERROR)
80 IF ERROR THEN 60 (DO IT AGAIN!)
90 PRINT#1,"U2:"2;1;(T);(S)
      X-DRIVE 1
100 PRINT"TRACK-"T" SECTOR"S
110 NEXT S,T
120 CLOSE 2
130 CLOSE 1
140 PRINT"FINISHED!"
150 END
```

The above program copies from drive (0) to drive (1). Change it as required. You must first format the clone disk. This can be done by formatting or using the partially formatted disk after a failed backup. Running the above program, you will copy each sector on to the clone diskette. A good copy will result that can be duped without problems.

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 0 = DEL       | 32 = 9          |
| 1 = RETURN    | 33 = I          |
| 2 = CRSR RT   | 34 = J          |
| 3 = F7        | 35 = 0          |
| 4 = F1        | 36 = M          |
| 5 = F3        | 37 = K          |
| 6 = F5        | 38 = O          |
| 7 = CRSR DOWN | 39 = N          |
| 8 = 3         | 40 = +          |
| 9 = W         | 41 = P          |
| 10 = A        | 42 = L          |
| 11 = 4        | 43 = -          |
| 12 = Z        | 44 = .          |
| 13 = S        | 45 = :          |
| 14 = E        | 46 = @          |
| 15 =          | 47 = ,          |
| 16 = 5        | 48 = E          |
| 17 = 7        | 49 = *          |
| 18 = D        | 50 = ;          |
| 19 = 6        | 51 = HOME       |
| 20 = C        | 52 =            |
| 21 = F        | 53 = =          |
| 22 = T        | 54 =            |
| 23 = X        | 55 = /          |
| 24 = 7        | 56 = 1          |
| 25 = Y        | 57 = BACK ARROW |
| 26 = G        | 58 =            |
| 27 = 8        | 59 = 2          |
| 28 = B        | 60 = SPACE      |
| 29 = H        | 61 =            |
| 30 = U        | 62 = Q          |
| 31 = V        | 63 = STOP       |
|               | 64 = NO KEY     |



## Speedcheck

by Felt Lair

Catalina C.C.C.

The spelling checker for "SpeedScript", which is called "SpeedCheck", appeared in the December 1985 issue of Compute's Gazette. It is not only an interesting program, but the article itself is quite an informative tutorial on spelling checkers in general. At least, I found that I had a much better idea of how such programs work after reading it. The program will work not only with SpeedScript, but (with modifications) with WordPro 3, Plus/64, PaperClip, or any other word processor which stores text in program files rather than sequential files. This should also include Paperback Writer, which is compatible with PaperClip. Unlike commercial spelling checkers, SpeedCheck starts you out with a blank dictionary (unless you get the program from Compute on disk, in which case it has a dictionary with 2,000 entries to start out with) rather than a prepared one with X-thousand entries. This may seem a drawback at first, and probably is if you are a really lousy speller, but it seems to me an advantage too in that you can completely customize your dictionary to meet your needs and wants.

Building a dictionary is not as difficult as it may sound. Let's say that you have some compatible word processor text that you want to check...and nothing in your dictionary file as yet. Once you have prepared a blank dictionary disk and are in the spelling check mode, the screen fills with your text, all "unknown" words being highlighted in a color different from that of the text. If it is your first use of the dictionary, most of the words will be highlighted. (The minimum length of the words to be checked is set at a default of 5 characters, but this can be changed.) The highlighted words may or may not be spelled correctly; they are highlighted because the dictionary is blank. To enter a word in the dictionary, you move the cursor to the word, press RETURN, and the word will appear on the command line at the top of the screen. Only there can it be edited, not within the text itself. If you know that the word is spelled correctly and want it in your dictionary, pressing F3 will make the entry for you. If you are not sure whether or not the word is spelled correctly, you will have to look it up in a dictionary, something you would have to do anyway. If it is misspelled you can edit it in the command line, then press F3 to enter it. You don't have to sit down and key in 1,000 or 20,000 words "off the cuff" before you start using the program. Also, by using actual text to make your entries, you are building a dictionary that is practical for you.

It makes no sense to enter words which present no spelling [or typing] problems for you. Since we tend to make the same spelling [or typing] mistakes over and over, it would be my guess that having them brought to your attention with SpeedCheck will develop some new reflexes on the user's part so that once problem words will cease to be so. Another reason for not putting words you have no trouble with into your dictionary is the time factor. The amount of time needed to check any given text is dependent on the number of dictionary entries the program has to run through. The more words in the dictionary, the longer it takes to check a document. This is also the reason for setting the minimum word length at 5 characters. [Ed. Note: However, if your problem is typing, these may be the very words you want to check!]

## The Shard of Spring

by Bob Rish

CHUG, Central, Houston

"The Shard of Spring" is a new release by Strategic Simulations, Inc. (\$39.95). SSI has an impressive track record of creating detailed, comprehensive, and challenging simulations of various military campaigns, historical battles, sports events, business competitions, as well as fantasy role adventures. "Shard" falls into the last category. It is a role playing adventure, involving planning, quick thinking, and luck. SSI considers "Shard" an introductory level, but I found it to be no easy game.

The basic story line is that an important magical artifact, the Shard of Spring, has been stolen, and you must find and return it. There is the small problem of various monsters, wizards, orcs, kobolds, zombies, warriors and hidden dangers between you and your goal. And, these are not arcade sprites that "zap" at your troop of men. Each character and creature in the game has specific abilities, traits, and weaknesses. You have some control over the characteristics of the members of your party. In fact, creating and outfitting a party is itself a major step.

For example, as you create your band of adventurers, you must select between warriors and wizards. For the warriors, you must select from a dozen or so weapons, fighting and survival skills. Wizards are assigned particular mystic skills, specific spell casting abilities, and lore. Some of these characteristics are chosen by you, others are cast by chance. After your group is formed, you must buy the supplies, weapons and armor you think are most needed.

When ready, your group travels the countryside at your direction. The various screens are very detailed graphics. Sooner or later your band runs into members of the opposition, and you enter the "combat" phase. You can run or clash with the enemy and use the individual skills of each member of your group to attack, and hopefully defeat the enemy. Various factors are built into the program to affect the effectiveness of weapon blows, spells cast, and defenses raised. You continue as long as any of your party survive, and you may save a game in progress, to resume at another time, or back-track from a disaster.

The program is on both sides of a single disk. The first side is a "starter" program, and presumably the second side has the specifics of the game. You must create a Character Disk, upon which the characteristics of the individuals you create are saved for



BE MY VALENTINE



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The MCCC NEWS accepts advertising from both members and from commercial establishments. Member rates are free for classified ads. These ads must be computer related and not of a commercial nature. A commercial ad is defined as one where you are running a business and are selling the same item or items to many people. Members submitting such ads will be charged commercial rates.

COMMERCIAL RATES are as follows: \$60.00 per full page ad, \$30.00 per half page ad, \$20.00 per quarter page ad and \$10.00 per business card. Non-members will pay commercial rates.

The deadline for submissions to the MCCC NEWS is the third Saturday of each month. PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY CAMERA-READY AD COPY. Make all checks payable to Mid-Cities Commodore Club and mail to MCCC NEWS, P.O. Box 1578, Bedford, TX 76021.

future use. One party of characters is included on the game disk and transferred to the Character Disk for use. The only material defect I found concerned this ready-made party. When I loaded it, some of the file was corrupted, eventually causing a crash. Looking at the quality of the program and the documentation, I imagine my problem to be caused by a defect in the disk medium itself, and SSI will replace defective disks.

I recommend "The Shard of Spring" as a first rate role playing/adventure game. If you cannot find it locally, it

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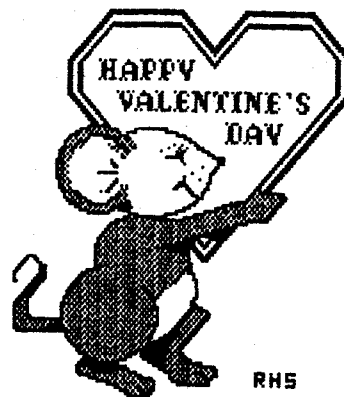
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can be ordered directly from SSI. I found the program disk impossible to back-up, but SSI includes a back-up disk offer for \$12.

# FEBRUARY 1987

| SUN | MON                               | TUE                               | WED | THU                    | FRI | SAT                                          |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------|
| 1   | 2                                 | 3                                 | 4   | 5                      | 6   | 7<br>BOARD<br>MEETING<br>10:00 AM            |
| 8   | 9                                 | 10                                | 11  | 12                     | 13  | 14<br>ARLNGTN<br>FT/WRTH<br>GRAND<br>PRAIRIE |
| 15  | 16<br>FT/WRTH<br>NIGHT<br>7:00 PM | 17                                | 18  | 19<br>AMIGA<br>7:00 PM | 20  | 21<br>H.E.B.<br>1:30 PM                      |
| 22  | 23                                | 24<br>GRAND<br>PRAIRIE<br>6:30 PM | 25  | 26                     | 27  | 28                                           |



## MEETINGS

- Feb. 7 Board Meeting, 10am  
Western Hills Inn, Euless
- Feb. 14 ARLINGTON CHAPTER, 1:30pm  
Arlington Community Center
- FT. WORTH CHAPTER, 1:30pm  
Gen. Dyn. Rec. Center, Room 2
- GRAND PRAIRIE CHAPTER, 1:30pm  
Grand Prairie Public Library
- Feb. 16 FT. WORTH NIGHT CHAPTER, 7:00pm  
St. Elisabeth Epis. Church
- Feb. 19 AMIGA CHAPTER, 7:00pm  
Arlington Community Center
- Feb. 21 H. E. B. CHAPTER, 1:30pm  
Hurst Recreation Center
- Feb. 24 GRAND PRAIRIE CHAPTER, 6:30pm  
Grand Prairie Public Library
- Mar. 7 Board Meeting, 10:00am  
Western Hills Inn, Euless

### BYTES



"MY DAD THINKS A KILO-BYTE IS WHAT YOU GET FROM A RABID DOG!"

## MCCC NEWS

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